Metaphysics as a Rhizome: A Short Essay on How Humans Keep Making Meaning

History looks chaotic when you zoom in too close. Empires explode, cities burn, ideologies rage, and everyone swears this is the final collapse until we invent

another round of collapses. Yet there's an odd continuity beneath all this drama: the human impulse to give the universe structure. Not a theological structure necessarily. Just a structure.

Call that metaphysics, but don't imagine

ancient bearded dudes. Think of metaphysics as a species-wide habit: sketching invisible diagrams of how reality works so we don't feel like we're trapped in cosmic RNG. Humans are basically myth-driven pattern machines with anxiety issues.

The playful twist: this metaphysics is less "great root of civilization" and more "underground rhizome." It spreads sideways. It grows by improvisation. It doesn't need a trunk or a Father God or a linear storyline. One branch dries up, another pops out somewhere else.

Medieval theology gets dismantled? Fine, Enlightenment rationalism sprouts. Rationalism gets roasted by Nietzsche? Cool, science doubles down. Science gets shaken by Gödel, Heisenberg, and quantum doom? Systems theory appears blinking like, “hi, I heard you

needed a new worldview."

If you track world history through metaphysical turns, the accidental suddenly looks surprisingly systematic. Each era invents a picture of the world that's coherent enough to organize knowledge, politics, and social life.

Religion works as the early hosting platform—like the ancient version of cloud computing—but eventually secular philosophy, science, and bureaucratic ideologies take over the hosting. Still, the function remains: make meaning, build institutions, keep chaos at arm's length.

This means the backbone of civilization isn't necessarily religion, nor culture in the everyday sense. It's the ongoing ability to generate metaphysical coherence. Civilizations don't simply rise and fall; they update their operating systems. The engines behind them

mutate, fork, crash, reboot, and sometimes run parallel versions like a messy open-source project.

Seen from global history, the same rhizomatic pattern stretches across wildly different civilizations. China blends moral philosophy

with cosmic order without needing a Western-style church. India develops plural metaphysical traditions that outlive every empire. The Islamicate world fuses theology with science, then sends mathematical software upgrades westward. Europe takes those

upgrades, repackages them as modernity, and eventually sells them back to the world as universal reason. Humans are shameless like that.

So the big picture isn't blind chaos. It's a looping, branching, constantly re-coded metaphysical pattern.

The world doesn’t need a single root to feel connected; it needs an ongoing stream of meaning-production that refuses to die. Every civilization is just one experimental patch in that endless evolutionary process.

When you look at

humanity through this lens, the random tragedies don't disappear, but they join a much larger improvisation. History becomes less about collapse and more about metamorphosis. Civilizations don't leave corpses; they leave compost for whatever

grows next. The rhizome continues.